



**RMC**  
Rural Maryland Council

**Rural Maryland Council  
MAERDAF/RMPIF Grant  
Information Session**



**RMC**  
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**[rural.maryland.gov](http://rural.maryland.gov)**

# Who we are

- An independent state agency housed under the Maryland Department of Agriculture
- First established in 1993 by Governor's Executive Order. Formally established in Maryland Statute in 1995 (Economic Development Article, Sec. 13-401)
- Funded under the State's Operating Budget
- For Fiscal Year 2020:
  - Council (Operating) funded at \$513,917
  - MAERDAF funded at \$680,917
  - RMPIF components funded at \$ 1,027,833 million

# Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF)

- Created in 2000 to provide financial assistance to rural-serving nonprofit organizations that promote statewide and regional planning, economic and community development and agricultural and forestry education efforts.
- Between 2001 and 2018, MAERDAF awarded over \$4.4 million in grants to rural organizations leveraging this funding into a total of \$11 million. (1:4 ratio)
- For Fiscal Year 2019, the RMC received 109 applications requesting approximately \$3,256,990.93 in funding and dispersed a total of \$1,093,930 to 39 organizations.

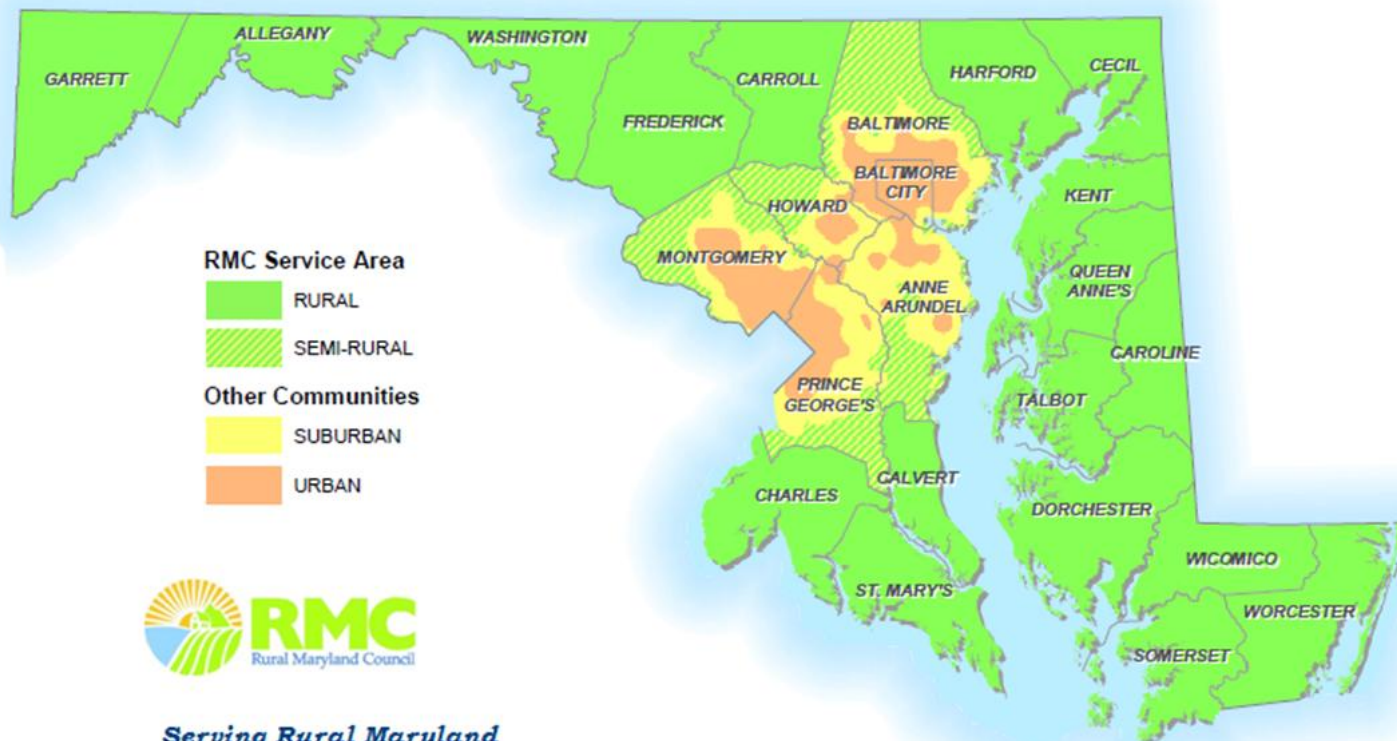
# Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)

- Authorized by the Maryland General Assembly in 2006.
- **Stronger rural communities**  
=  
**A stronger Maryland**
- Primary goal of RMPIF is to provide targeted investments to various regional, nonprofit and educational entities to bring Rural Maryland's standards of living up to statewide averages.



# RMPIF First Funded in FY 2017

- RMC received approximately \$2 million in FY 2017 for the first time for RMPIF
- In FY 2019, RMC received 48 applications for a total of \$4,763,525.00 requested. A total of 31 applications totaling \$2,316,829.55 were distributed to 28 organizations.
- Additional funding was distributed to the State's five regional councils (\$411,133 each)
- Total funding amount: \$6,334,000



# MAERDAF Guidelines

- **Eligible Applicants:** 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organizations, Regional Councils and Community Colleges
- **Purpose:** to increase the overall capacity of rural-serving nonprofit organizations and community colleges to meet a multitude of rural development challenges and to help them establish new public/private partnerships for leveraging non-state sources of funding
- **Where:** Serve 2 or more rural counties or statewide
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
- **Preference:** Projects that have an equal or greater match
- **Grant Amounts:** The maximum grant amount is \$40,000. Average award is around \$17,000



# Grant Decisions

- Grant award determinations for both programs are made by the independent MAERDAF Grant Review Board set by law and consisting of the Secretaries (or their designee) of:
  - Department of Agriculture
  - Department of Business and Economic Development (now Commerce)
  - Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
  - Department of Housing and Community Development
  - Department of Natural Resources
  - as well as the Chair (or the designee) of the Rural Maryland Council.
- Decisions by the MAERDAF Grant Review Board are final and binding

# Eligible Entities

- Applicants must be in “Good Standing” with the State of Maryland. Go to <http://sdat.resiusa.org/UCC-Charter/Pages/CharterSearch/default.aspx> to find if your organization is in good standing with the State of Maryland.
- We do not require a copy of the certificate; it is sufficient to provide a screen shot and attach it with your application **AS LONG AS IT SHOWS WHETHER THE ENTITY IS CURRENTLY IN GOOD STANDING.**
- An explanation for an entity not in good standing must be included with the application otherwise, the application will be rejected.
- Include a recent Form 990 (where applicable)

# Eligible Expenditures

- Salaries and Wages are allowable expenses. It is strongly encouraged to include a statement on sustainability for future years.
- Construction and renovation of buildings are eligible expenses. Acquisition of land is not.
- The purchase or rental of vehicles are eligible expenses.
- Meals are allowable if the costs are reasonable and a justification is provided that such activity maintains the continuity of the meeting and to do otherwise will impose arduous conditions on the meeting participants.

# Ineligible Expenditures

- Contributions, donations or subsequent subawards to third parties are ineligible expenses.
- Organized fundraising including financial campaigns, solicitation of gifts or bequests, or similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions regardless of the purpose for which the funds will be used are ineligible.
- Advocacy/lobbying activities are ineligible expenses.

# Changes and Unused Funds

- Only very minor changes in scope are allowed after a grant has been awarded. Some project timelines can also be modified.
- Unused grant funds must be returned to the Rural Maryland Council no later than July 13, 2020.

# Ranking Criteria

- Basic Criteria: Applicant meets all basic eligibility requirements – it serves a regional (multi-county) or statewide rural constituency (or is a community college) and holds an appropriate IRS tax designation.
- Applicant has clearly identified a well substantiated need and developed a Scope of Work that clearly describes specific project activities and how a MAERDAF grant will be used. Specific goals and measurable objectives were clearly stated and appear to be achievable.
- Its Mission Statement is included and lends itself to the activities and goals addressed in the proposal. Goals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.
- The organization has the experience, expertise and resources to deliver on this scope of work. Operational and line-item budgets were included and seem reasonable.

# Ranking Criteria (Continued)

- The applicant has equal matching funds from non-state sources. If there are no matching funds, applicant seems likely to leverage additional financial resources to match the grant. Priority is given to applicants with in-kind and funding matches.
- Other organizations, businesses, agencies and/or other community-based entities have expressed strong support for the organization's work and planned grant activities. Letters of support and other supportive materials (newspapers articles, etc.) were included.
- Project/proposal falls under one or more of the following priorities: Agriculture/Forestry Education; Community and Economic Development; Health Care; and, Regional Planning.
- Grant agreements: Awardees are required to execute a grant agreement.
- Record keeping: Grantees are required to record expenditures and file an interim and final report with the RMC.
- Sample grant agreements and reporting guidelines can be found at [rural.maryland.gov](http://rural.maryland.gov)



Photos courtesy of LEAD Maryland, Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, MAC, Inc., Asian American Center of Frederick, and Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center



# Past MAERDAF Awardees

- Garrett County Community Action Committee, \$19,160 enabling coaching services and career ladder opportunities
- Historic St. Mary's City Foundation, \$14,370 to construct a wooden, timber-frame pavilion with flexible enclosures to use as covered space
- Lifestyles of MD Foundation, \$9,368 to purchase web-based transportation dispatch software
- Frederick CTC FFA, \$14,370 for an agricultural entrepreneurship program
- LEAD Maryland, \$19,160 for Class IX seminars
- Maintaining Active Citizens, Inc., \$5,786 for therapeutic gardens and nutrition and cooking classes



Photo courtesy of Frederick CTC FFA

# Past MAERDAF Awardees

- Chesapeake College Foundation, \$9,469.00 for tractor maintenance and OSHA compliance program
- End Hunger in Calvert County, \$7,500 for a Volunteer Maryland coordinator
- Farming 4 Hunger, \$27,000 for Agriculture Education/Workforce Investment Initiative
- Garrett County Memorial Hospital, \$25,000 for purchase of vehicle for Community Health Workers
- Hagerstown Community College, \$29,813.00 for environmental science program
- Historic Sotterley, \$27,580.96 for construction of wooden pavilion
- Maryland Forestry Foundation, \$25,140.00 for Mel Fellowship Program

# MAERDAF Requirements

- Projects must be regional (more than one county)
- Priority is given to projects with matching funds
- Letters of support are recommended (Full Application)
- Letter of Intent (LOI) Proposals are **due May 31, 2019, 5PM**
- Projects must be completed within one year

# RMPIF Guidelines – Rural Regional Planning & Development Councils

- **Eligible Applicants:** Tri-County Council of Western Maryland, Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland, Upper Shore Regional Council, Mid-Shore Regional Council, Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore, and multicounty efforts serving rural communities in areas not served by the regional councils.
- **Purpose:** to provide grants specifically for projects and activities of the five regional planning and development councils and for other multi-county rural improvement efforts.
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
- **Grant Amounts:** Each regional council is eligible to receive up to \$411,133 in FY2020 for rural regional planning and development assistance, as well as applications received from a multi-county effort (Frederick, Carroll, Harford) in areas not served by an existing regional council.

# RMPIF Guidelines – Entrepreneurship Development



- **Eligible Applicants:** Applicants must be local government, institute of higher education, regional council, 501(c)(3) IRS tax designation or similar and serve a regional or statewide rural constituency. Community Colleges, Career Technology Centers, Regional Councils and Libraries are eligible applicants.
- **Purpose:** to promote entrepreneurship and assist efforts that provide training and technical assistance to the entrepreneurs who can help build prosperous and sustainable rural communities by creating jobs, raising incomes, creating wealth and improving quality of life.
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
- **Grant Amounts:** No maximum grant amount; \$ 1,027,833.00 allotted funds, Grant Review Board will optimally fund 6 entrepreneurial projects.

# RMPIF Guidelines – Entrepreneurship Development

- **Eligible Projects:** Proposals should be regional (two or more counties) or intergovernmental (meaning two units of government).
- **Eligible Expenditures:**
  - Salaries and Wages are allowable expenses, it is highly encouraged to include a statement on sustainability for future years;
  - Administrative costs including construction, leasing and renovation of buildings are eligible; should not exceed more than 25% of grant request;
  - Purchase or rental of vehicles;
  - Meals are allowable of costs are reasonable and justified;
  - Indirect administrative costs capped at 10%.
- **Ineligible Expenditures:**
  - Acquisition of land is ineligible
- **Match Required:**
  - Must secure a minimum 2:1 or 50% cash match funds from non-state sources.
  - Federal funds are considered matching cash funds.

# RMPIF Guidelines – Infrastructure



- **Eligible Applicants:** Applicants must be local government, institute of higher education, regional council, 501(c)(3) IRS tax designation or similar and serve a regional or statewide rural constituency. Community Colleges, Career Technology Centers, Regional Councils and Libraries are eligible applicants.
- **Purpose:** to support projects that involve two or more units of government and are related to broadband, water, wastewater, transportation, workforce housing, and commercial/industrial facilities up to 25% of the total project costs. Workforce housing is defined as housing targeted to 80 to 120% of median income of the community in which employees work.
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
- **Grant Amounts:** No maximum grant amount; \$1,027,833.00 allotted funds, Grant Review Board will optimally fund 4 infrastructure projects.

# RMPIF Guidelines – Infrastructure

- **Eligible Projects:** Proposals should be intergovernmental (meaning two units of government).
- **Eligible Expenditures:**
  - Salaries and Wages are allowable expenses, it is highly encouraged to include a statement on sustainability for future years;
  - Construction and renovation of buildings are eligible;
  - Purchase or rental of vehicles is eligible;
  - Permitting costs are eligible expenses;
  - Indirect administrative costs capped at 10%.
- **Ineligible Expenditures:**
  - Acquisition of land is ineligible.
- **Match Required:**
  - **Must have secured over 75% matching funds from non-state sources.**
  - **A match is required for infrastructure projects.**
  - Federal funds are considered matching cash funds.



# RMPIF Guidelines – Health Care



- **Eligible Applicants:** Applicants must be local government, institute of higher education, regional council, 501(c)(3) IRS tax designation or similar and serve a regional or statewide rural constituency. Eligible applicants include federally qualified health centers, area health education centers, local health clinics and other rural-serving health organizations.
- **When:** Projects must be completed between August 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
- **Grant Amounts:** No maximum grant amount; \$1,027,833.00 allotted funds, Grant Review Board will optimally fund up to 6 health care projects.
- **Eligible Projects:**
  - **Programs that implement and measure components of the 2018 Maryland Rural Health Plan (<http://mdruralhealthplan.org/>)**
  - **Recruitment and retention of health care providers;**
  - **Improving access to health and medical/dental care;**
  - **Behavioral and mental health;**
  - **Chronic disease prevention and management;**
  - **Oral and dental health.**

# RMPIF Guidelines – Health Care

- **Eligible Projects:** Proposals should be regional (two or more counties) or intergovernmental (meaning two units of government).
- **Eligible Expenditures:**
  - Salaries and Wages are allowable expenses, it is highly encouraged to include a statement on sustainability for future years;
  - Administrative costs including construction, leasing and renovation of buildings or purchase of equipment are eligible; should not exceed more than 25% of grant request;
  - Purchase or rental of vehicles;
  - Meals are allowable if costs are reasonable and justified;
  - Indirect administrative costs capped at 10%.
- **Ineligible Expenditures:**
  - Acquisition of land is ineligible.
- **Match Required:**
  - Applicants must secure a minimum 2:1 or 50% cash match funds from non-state sources.
  - Federal funds are considered matching cash funds.

# Ranking Criteria

- Basic Criteria: Applicant meets all basic eligibility requirements – it serves a regional (multi-county) or statewide rural constituency (or is a community college) and holds an appropriate IRS tax designation or is inter-governmental (meaning two units of government).
- Applicant has clearly identified a well substantiated need and developed a Scope of Work that clearly describes specific project activities and how a RMPIF grant will be used. Specific goals and measurable objectives were clearly stated and appear to be achievable.
- Proposal will significantly impact the quality of living in rural Maryland. Proposal demonstrates substantial value and lasting impact by providing information which includes relevant background research, opportunities for replication, and a statement of impact.
- Its Mission Statement is included and lends itself to the activities and goals addressed in the proposal. Goals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

# Ranking Criteria (Continued)

- Applicants must secure a minimum 2:1 or 50% cash match funds from non-state sources. Federal funds are considered matching cash funds. A stronger cash match will result in a higher score on the grant evaluation, but is not required. RMPIF funds will not be released until proof of a match is submitted.
- Other organizations, businesses, agencies and/or other community-based entities have expressed strong support for the organization's work and planned grant activities. Letters of support and other supportive materials (newspapers articles, etc.) were included.
- Project/proposal falls under one or more of the following priorities: **rural regional planning councils, rural entrepreneurship development, rural infrastructure, and rural health care organizations**. Project clearly defines a designated benchmark and outcome associated with the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund.
- Grant agreements: Awardees are required to execute a grant agreement.
- Record keeping: Grantees are required to record expenditures and file an interim and final report with the RMC.
- Sample grant agreements and reporting guidelines can be found at [rural.maryland.gov](http://rural.maryland.gov)

# Past RMPIF Awardees

- Caroline County Health Department \$30,000 for opioid abuse training for EMS
- College of Southern Maryland Foundation/SBDC, \$20,000 for regional web-based information portal
- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, \$119,420 for F3 (Farm, Fish, Food) Tech Accelerator Program
- Tech Frederick, \$30,000 for video equipment for small business pitches
- Lower Shore Clinic, \$57,500.00 for salary for a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

# Past RMPIF Awardees

- City of Crisfield \$125,000 for replacement for wastewater treatment system
- Garrett County Community Action \$90,000 for installation of NuBeam broadband for low-income families
- Kent County Economic Development \$200,000 for development of roads for Chestertown Business Campus
- Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company \$48,655.00 for construction of public laundromat facility

# RMPIF Report to DLS due September 1, 2020

- Joint Chairmen's Report from 2019 Legislative Session
- The fiscal 2020 budget includes \$5.8 million for the Rural Maryland Council to provide grants to improve outcomes in rural communities.
- The committees request that the Rural Maryland Council submit a report by September 1, 2019, on input, output, outcome, and efficiency measures that show the direct connection between the funding that it provides in grants and the improvement in quality of life in rural communities.

# Outputs/Outcomes/Impact

- Healthcare

- Patient engagement – number of services, outreach calls, intakes, assessments
- Transportation provided to #
- # new positions – how many people did they serve?
- Tech – new equipment purchased, number of people trained to use it, number of patients engaged with it
- Non-tech equipment – hoists, vehicles,
- # of investments in capacity – accreditation, electronic health records, telemedicine equipment
- Education – issues, number of people trained/train the trainers/total numbers educated
- Community Clinics – how many, in how many locations, # and type of services offered there, track hospital readmissions?



## • Economic Development

- Number of new jobs created
- Number of new businesses created
- Number of new products created
- Number of new incubators created
- Innovation (F-3 Accelerator programs)
- Supporting new industries (aquaculture)
- Dollar amount of investments in capital and equipment
- Entrepreneurship – introduce people to it, train people to do it - #s
- Number and types of outreach and recruitment – job fairs, etc.
- Number and amounts of loans made
- Workforce training - # sessions, participants
- Leadership development - #s participated
- New engagement strategies that increase tourism (geocache trail)

- Education

- Number of education events, new courses created
- Number of people trained
- Investments in capital items such as vehicles to improve access and equipment such as museum equipment and buildings, tractor with front-end loader, off-road utility vehicle and trailer, multi-purpose building, wet lab, high tunnel, mobile career center, video equipment, job centers
- Create new positions for volunteer coordinator, fellowship
- Range of participants – adults, professions, youth, incarcerated people, ag education projects, veterans, non-native speakers, entrepreneurs, warehouse employees

- Infrastructure -

- Pounds of nutrients reduced that enter regional waterways (connect to WIP and TMDL goals)
- # of households connected to the internet, and # of communities who have created system engineering and timeline to connect rural communities to broadband
- \$ Capital investment in public facilities (mental health centers, laundromats, WW treatment, mapping of utilities, museums)
- \$ Capital investment in transportation technology as well as vehicles for populations needing access and/or emergency vehicles

# Deadlines for MAERDAF & RMPIF

- **Deadline for Letter of Intent (LOI) proposals:  
May 31, 2019, 5:00PM**
- **Notification: Applicants will be notified on June 24, 2019 by email**
- **Friday, July 26, 2019 - Full application due to RMC by 5:00pm.**
- **Monday, August 19, 2019 – Grant Recipients announced**

# How to Apply

**Access the guidelines, criteria, and online grantee portal:**  
**[https://rural.maryland.gov/maerdaf\\_rmpif/](https://rural.maryland.gov/maerdaf_rmpif/)**

- To submit an LOI, you will need to ensure you have an account in the Grantee Portal. Please have the following information on hand to create your organization's account:
  - An email address that will act as your username
  - Your contact information
  - Your organization's or fiscal sponsor's information, including the EIN/Tax ID number
  - Your organization's website url
  - Your organization's Executive Officer's contact information
- Please retain a record of your login information as you will need it in the future to access your in-progress applications and your online application history. Applications can be accessed only via the account in which they were started.



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